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Medical

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This instruction implements AFPD 44-1, *Medical Operations*. It establishes the requirement for critical incident stress teams (CIST) at all active duty Air Force installations, encouraging an integration of resources and efforts of the active and reserve components. Finally, it defines the composition and role of these teams in providing pre-exposure preparation training, defusings and critical incident stress debriefings (CISD).

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1. General Information. Many types of events have the potential to produce individual and community traumatic stress. It is Air Force policy to provide critical incident stress management preventive services to unit and community members before potentially traumatic events occur and post-event to help those who have experienced traumatic events. The goal is to assist those affected by traumatic events to cope with the normal stress reaction in an effective manner. These actions are intended to minimize the impact of exposure to these events and prevent or mitigate permanent disability if possible.

2. Organizational Responsibilities.

2.1. Establishment and mobilization of CIST.

2.1.1. The senior wing commander or installation commander at each active duty Air Force installation will ensure the establishment of at least one CIST to address local needs. These teams will assist local individuals and units in preparing for and dealing with traumatic events. When forming these teams, commanders should consider CISM resources available through nearby military installations, active or reserve. Installations with more than one resident wing are not required to have more than one CIST.

2.1.2. Wing commanders at Andrews, Travis, Scott, Keesler, Wright-Patterson, and Lackland AFB (Wilford Hall Medical Center) will establish at least one primary and alternate deployable critical incident stress team. These teams will provide constant availability and assistance when the impact of a traumatic incident exceeds the capacity of locally available resources. These bases will be assigned regions for which they are responsible (attachment 2). Procedures to request activation of these teams are contained in paragraph 2.4.

2.1.3. The deployable team for PACAF will be established by the wing commander at Elmendorf AFB. The deployable team for USAFE will be established by the wing commander at Ramstein AB. For events outside of CONUS requiring support in addition to the deployable teams within the region, specific CONUS bases with deployable teams will be assigned specific regional support responsibilities (attachment 3).

2.1.4. Other units, including AFRES and ANG, may establish deployable critical incident stress teams as directed by the installation commander. Establishment of the team should be coordinated with the MAJCOM (ANG/SG in the case of the Air National Guard) and HQ AFMOA/SGOC to assure awareness of the resource.

2.1.5. Teams will be mobilized in the event of a critical incident. When the local command post becomes aware of a potentially traumatic event, it will notify the CIST chief as part of required notification protocol. The wing commander is responsible for ensuring an effective notification and activation process. When no local team is available, the local command post will notify the command post at the regional support base and will coordinate with its MAJCOM/SG for mobilization of one of the regional or overseas deployable teams.

2.1.6. CISM services must be provided in response to all Class A aircraft mishaps. The CIST will be activated immediately through the Command Post of the base called upon to provide an interim Safety Investigation Board (SIB). CIST chief will be listed on the Command Post required notification list for an aircraft mishap. The Command Post at the base incurring the loss of aircraft or personnel will notify the local CIST chief to activate support for local base personnel, regardless of the location of the mishap itself.

2.1.6.1. CISTs at SIB supporting bases (i.e., the base nearest to the mishap site) are responsible

for providing CISM support to mishap victims. For mishaps that do not occur near an Air Force base, the command post of the wing whose assets were involved will be responsible for identification and mobilization of a deployable CIST to support the air crew, search and recovery teams and local community experiencing the traumatic event. All individuals participating in search and rescue activities should have the opportunity to receive daily defusings and a final debriefing prior to departing the crash site. Professional personnel, such as, forensic pathologists, morticians, etc., should also have the opportunity to attend CISM sessions but are not required to do so. Air crew and other squadron members who incur a loss of aircraft, loss of personnel or significant injury to personnel as a result of an aircraft mishap, regardless of the assessed cost of the mishap, should have the opportunity to receive stress defusings and stress debriefings from the CIST at their assigned base. At the initiation of CIST, the team leader will establish debriefing ground rules to include informing participants that CIST is not a part of the safety investigation process. Following Class A aircraft mishaps (as defined in AFI 91-204), Air Force personnel may request and be provided up to four one-on-one CIST sessions. If greater than four debriefing sessions are required, either mental health treatment or counseling by the chaplain may be initiated; stress debriefing will be concluded.

2.1.6.2. All personnel trained as Air Force Safety Center (AFSC) Safety Investigation Board (SIB) representatives will receive CISM training to provide peer support assistance to staff members returning from major mishap investigations, to assist in identification of needs of other SIB members, and to make appropriate referrals and requests for consultation from the supporting base CIST. AFSC SIB representatives serve in an investigative role and will not be expected to respond with CISM support for individuals impacted by the mishap. A peer stress defuser will be assigned to support the SIB at the supporting base. When a peer CIST member is not available, the CIST chief will assign appropriate support to the SIB. SIB members and supporting personnel should have the opportunity to receive a final stress defusing as a group prior to departing the convening site at the completion of the investigation. This defusing will be conducted by the supporting base CIST and be offered to all personnel who participate in the SIB process including transcriptionists who transcribe emotionally-provocative materials. Consultants and other non-voting members who depart prior to the completion of the investigation should have the opportunity to receive a defusing prior to their departure. The CIST chief, in consultation with the AFSC SIB representative, will determine if a full stress debriefing is appropriate depending on the nature of the mishap and the exposure to traumatizing events and materials.

2.2. Team membership and formation. Critical incident stress teams will be composed of individuals fulfilling four roles:

- Medical--typically a primary care, family practice, or aerospace medicine physician.
- Mental health--typically a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, mental health nurse or 7-level mental health technician.
- Chaplain and Chaplain Service Support Personnel.
- Personnel representative--an enlisted ombudsman; a non-caregiver advocate for involved individuals who will bring the team expertise in military benefits, rights, military affairs, casualty affairs, and personnel issues.

2.2.1. These multidisciplinary teams will include, as a minimum, individuals in each of the four roles noted. There is no restriction to limit each role to one individual. Training of multiple individ-

uals to fulfill each role, including primary and alternate members for each role, is desirable to ensure continuous availability. The CIST chief determines the composition of the team responding to an incident based on the size of the event and the requirement to mentor new CIST members. All team members must have CISM training.

2.2.2. When forming teams on active duty installations, qualified ARC personnel should be considered as candidates for membership when available. ARC members may not fill deployable positions on CISTs, however.

2.2.3. Depending on the type of traumatic event, it is advisable for teams to have additional members from disaster response agencies, such as, security police, firefighters, casualty affairs, mortuary affairs. Additionally, qualified ARC personnel should be identified to augment CISTs where possible. These individuals must have prior CISM training or “just in time” CISM training provided by the CIST. Teams should also have members from the peer group. For example, critical incidents involving aircraft, a CISM-trained aviator or air crew member qualified in the involved weapon system (and a similarly qualified enlisted air crew member as appropriate to the weapon system) along with peer support members from the maintenance community will be available and encouraged as an adjunct to the CIST.

2.2.4. All members of deployable CISTs must be worldwide qualified.

2.2.5. The team chief will be the most qualified individual, similar to the aircraft commander role. The wing commander will appoint the team chief to function as the team leader. Team chief assignment will be identified to the Command Post by the wing commander to ensure required notification in the event of a critical incident.

2.2.6. The CIST chief will be responsible for coordinating CISM services to family and community members at a base experiencing or impacted by a critical incident. Such coordination may include coordinating with local off-base community disaster response services.

2.2.7. All teams will establish standard operating procedures which will include, as a minimum, an assessment of local conditions and high risk groups, survey of available locally-trained resources, and a response plan addressing team activation by the CIST chief.

2.3. CIST Training Requirements.

2.3.1. CIST members must receive training which covers topics including skills, interventions with special populations, command-related topics, and communication (see table 1). Initial training for team members should be from a nationally-recognized training body approved by the HQ USAF/SG (see attachment 4). HQ USAF/SG and HQ USAF/HC will explore opportunities to provide centrally funded learning opportunities to fulfill this requirement. Recurring training may be developed locally and should be reviewed by the MAJCOM/SG.

2.3.2. Volunteers to provide peer support CISM services will be elicited by squadron commanders and forwarded to the CIST chief. The CIST chief will be responsible for screening volunteers and arranging for their training to function in a peer support role. Training for peer support volunteers will include additional skill development in peer counseling techniques, limitations of the CISM process, responsibilities, and ethical considerations. The CIST chief will maintain a roster of trained peer support CISM volunteers who, can be selected to participate.

2.3.3. Teams will establish ongoing training and exercise requirements to assure the primary and backup team members maintain proficiency and can function effectively together. When possible, it is preferable for teams to train, exercise, and deploy as a unit.

2.3.4. At the discretion of the responsible commander and IAW AFI 10-802, *Military Support to Civil Authorities*, it is acceptable for the CIST or individual team members to assist in meeting local, regional, and national off-base needs as mission requirements permit. Humanitarian response can be used to fulfill a portion of ongoing training and exercise requirements.

2.3.5. Local funding will be used for training.

2.4. Deployment.

2.4.1. In the event a CONUS wing commander determines he or she does not have the necessary CISM resources to manage the potentially traumatic event, the commander will:

2.4.1.1. Contact the wing commander at the base serving the geographic area of responsibility (attachment 2). The wing commander serving the geographic area of responsibility will put his or her CIST chief in contact with the requesting wing commander. The requesting wing commander will, through consultation with the team chief determine the level and scope of support necessary. If it is determined the CIST is required, the requesting wing commander will provide the team chief with a fund site for travel of the team which must include rental cars or other vehicles dedicated to CIST use if military vehicles will not be available from base transportation resources.

2.4.1.2. The wing commander will establish a point of contact for the CIST chief to coordinate activities of the team, to include billeting, travel and transportation, and work location while deployed.

2.4.2. The team chief of the activated team has the following responsibilities upon activation of the regional CIST:

2.4.2.1. Notify the wing commander and medical facility commander of the activation of the CIST.

2.4.2.2. Notify the MAJCOM surgeon to which the team is assigned, providing details of the situation.

2.4.3. MAJCOM SG will:

2.4.3.1. Notify the respective MAJCOM/CC of the situation and the actions taken.

2.4.3.2. Notify HQ USAF/SG of the activation of their regional CIST along with all known information concerning the activation.

2.4.4. In the event that an OCONUS commander determines he or she does not have necessary resources to manage the traumatizing event, the commander will contact the wing commander at the base serving the OCONUS geographic area of responsibility (either the Elmendorf or Lakenheath wing commander). Deployment procedures will then be conducted as described in 2.4.1.1 to 2.4.3.2.

2.4.5. When an OCONUS event requires CISM support beyond what can be provided by the local CIST and the within region deployable CIST, the OCONUS Commander will request CIST support from the wing commander of the base designated as the support resource (attachment 3). If the deployable team at the designated support resource cannot be available or an additional team is

needed, the deployable teams at Scott AFB and Wright-Patterson AFB will be utilized for OCONUS support CISM. Deployment procedures will then be conducted as described in 2.4.1.1 to 2.4.3.2.

2.4.6. Host active duty installations will provide CISM support to collocated Air Reserve Component (ARC) units when requested. CISM support to non-collocated ARC units will be provided by the Air Force base with a deployable CIST located in the geographic region of the unit. When available, ARC units are encouraged to use their own resources. ARC units may also elect to contract for qualified helping personnel from DoD, other federal agencies, or the civilian community to meet their needs, which may include partnering with the Army in the case of the Air National Guard.

3. Pre-Exposure Preparation Training.

3.1. Pre-exposure preparation training is a preventive approach to help individuals prepare for and cope with potentially traumatic events. It can be useful for everyone facing exposure to a potentially traumatic event and promotes optimal performance. It is not just a program for people unable to handle difficult situations.

3.2. Pre-exposure preparation training emphasizes the normalcy of feeling stress in abnormal situations. Training focuses on practice of effective approaches to stress and avoidance of ineffective approaches. The training, provided by the CIST, is conducted when exposure to potentially traumatic events is expected. Material for conducting pre-exposure preparation training is contained in “Pre-Exposure Preparation Training” brochure (attachment 5), “Commanders’ and Supervisors’ Guide for Pre-Exposure Preparation Training” (attachment 6) and “Critical Incident Stress Team (CIST) Guide For Conducting Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP) Training” (attachment 7).

3.3. Pre-exposure preparation training can also be used to prepare an entire community when a potentially traumatic event, like a mobilization deployment, can be predicted.

3.4. When pre-exposure preparation training is not possible and when a potentially traumatic event has occurred, individuals not directly involved in the event can be given general educational meetings alerting them of the normal reactions to trauma.

4. Critical Incident Stress Debriefings and Defusings.

4.1. Critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) and defusings are strategies to help prevent or mitigate long-term emotional problems after a traumatic event happens on a base or during a deployment.

4.2. CISD is not therapy even though mental health and medical providers are part of the team. The goal is to encourage people to understand the normal emotional and cognitive reactions to traumatic events and to promote effective coping with their exposure to the event.

4.3. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) frequently results from not talking about, and being able to put into perspective, a traumatic event. The expectation is that CISD defuses the emotional intensity before PTSD develops. Once PTSD develops, the impairment caused by the long-term emotional response to the trauma is harder to fix. Prevention is preferred.

4.4. Stress defusings are relatively brief processes and represent the first line of critical incident response. They are primarily educational in nature. Defusings will be provided in response to critical incidents and will be accomplished as soon as possible but within 12 hours of the incident for all individuals impacted by the traumatic event. Defusings may constitute an appropriate response for personnel indirectly impacted by the incident. Debriefings will follow defusings for individuals directly impacted.

4.5. Stress debriefings will be provided in response to any traumatizing event. Stress debriefings are usually a group experience structured in phases to address cognitive, emotive, and physical responses from exposure to a potentially traumatic event. Debriefings will not be initiated while the critical event remains in progress, but will occur within 24 to 72 hours following the event to maximize effectiveness. Defusings may be used as an interim measure when disaster response limits personnel from being able to participate in CISD until later.

4.6. Individuals directly involved with the traumatic event must be provided the opportunity to receive a critical incident stress debriefing (CISD), also called a stress debriefing, to the extent this is possible with existing resources. CISDs help prevent long term emotional problems after traumatic events.

4.7. Individuals not directly involved with the traumatic event, but experiencing effects from the event, will be provided CISD upon request of unit commanders or as an open offering by the CISD at the local base.

4.8. Individuals identified as having extreme reactions to the traumatic event will be referred by the CIST for mainstream medical or mental health evaluation. All mental health evaluation referrals will be made in accordance with the requirements of AFI 44-109, *Mental Health and Military Law*.

Table 1. Curriculum On Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM).

Skills
Triage
Identification of medical complications and appropriate referral
Identification of high risk populations
Identification of medical patients at high risk for psychological sequelae
Mortuary-related issues death and dying); assisting Casualty Affairs Officers
Interventions with disaster workers exposed to death, dying and the grotesque
Debriefing
Death notification
Interventions with Special Populations
Children
Elderly
Cultural and ethnic considerations
Diversity of military members (active duty vs. guard and reserves; aviators, etc.)
Trauma overseas (coordination of multiple commands; communication with families)
Tragedies affecting an individual community (e.g., large loss from one base or small town)
Special issues concerning airplane accidents and terrorism
Command-Related Topics
Command consultation
Grief leadership
Management of rest and respite
Facilitation and integration of replacement personnel
Entree to the affected community
Community outreach
Communication
Benefits and challenges of modern technology (e.g., media announcing bad news before official channels have notified families)
Management of the media
Communication with family members and friends of victims

CHARLES H. ROADMAN, II, Lt General, USAF, MC
Air Force Surgeon General

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES, ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS, AND TERMS

References

AFI 10-802, *Military Support to Civil Authorities*

AFI 44-109, *Mental Health and Military Law*

AFI 91-204, *Safety Investigations and Reports*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFSC—Air Force Safety Center

ARC—Air Reserve Component

CISD—critical incident stress debriefing

CISM—critical incident stress management

CIST—critical incident stress team

CONUS—continental United States

MAJCOM—major command

OCONUS—outside continental United States

PACAF—Pacific Air Forces

PTSD—post-traumatic stress disorder

SIB—Safety Investigation Board

SG—Surgeon General

USAFE—United States Air Forces Europe

Terms

Critical Incident—An expression used to describe a potentially traumatic event.

Debriefings—Group experience structured in phases to address cognitive, emotive, and physical responses from exposure to a potentially traumatic event, not initiated while event remains in progress. Should be accomplished within 24-72 hours following the event to maximize prevention effectiveness.

Defusing—Shortened versions of debriefings, primarily educational in nature, provided in response to potentially traumatic events, accomplished as soon as possible but within 12 hours of exposure to event. Accomplished while repeated exposure to the event may continue. Constitutes an appropriate response for personnel indirectly impacted by the incident.

Peer Stress Defuser—Individual with critical incident stress management training who functions as an adjunct to the Critical Incident Stress Team due to his or her specific peer relationship to the affected group.

Potentially Traumatic Events—Fall into several categories, including deployments and operations

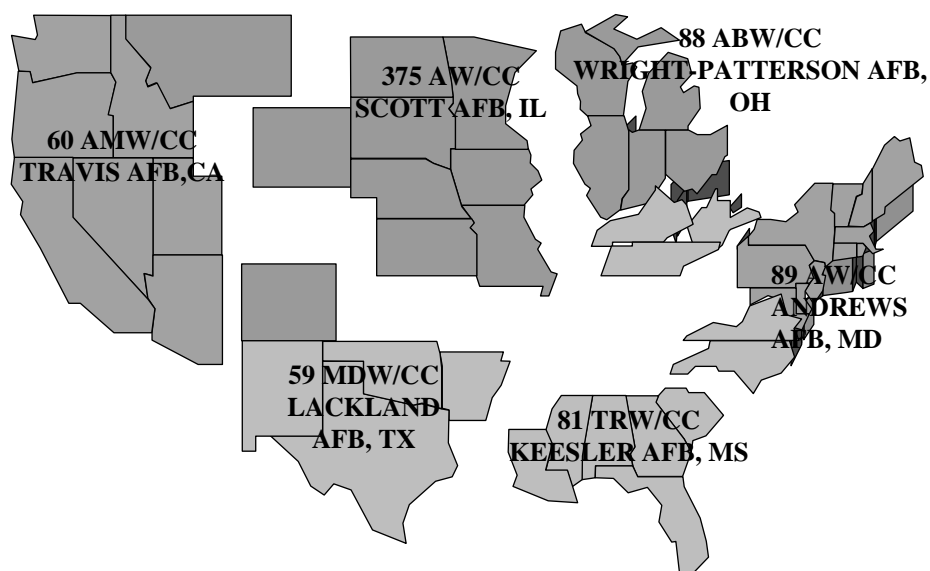
other than war; natural disasters, such as earthquake, hurricane, tornado, fire, and flood; acts of terrorism; combat; acts of violence, which may or may not include deaths; multiple injury or fatality accidents; acts of abuse; homicide, or suicide; serious threat or injury to self, family member, friend, or coworker--either real or perceived; and observation of any of the individual or community traumatic events listed.

Pre-Exposure Preparation Training—Preventive approach prior to exposure to potentially traumatic event that emphasizes normalcy of stress response and basic techniques in stress management.

Attachment 2

DEPLOYABLE CISTS' REGIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Figure A2.1. Deployable Cists' Regions of Responsibility.



Attachment 3

ASSIGNED SUPPORT CIST RESPONSIBILITIES FOR OCONUS EVENTS

USAFE - 89th AW/CC, Andrews AFB, MD

PACAF - 60th AMW/CC, Travis AFB, CA

CENTCOM - 59th MDW/CC, Lackland AFB (WHMC), TX

SOUTHCOM - 81st TRW/CC, Keesler AFB, MS

Alternate if assigned support CIST cannot respond or an additional team is needed:

74th AW/CC, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH

375th AW/CC, Scott AFB, IL

Attachment 4

SOURCES FOR CIST TRAINING

A4.1. Approved Sources. Approved sources include:

A4.1.1. Critical Incident Stress Foundation. This private organization maintains a database of 377 fully-trained teams nationwide and can be reached 24-hours a day. They can also provide information regarding availability of team training. Phone: 410-730-4311.

A4.1.2. The Johnson Institute, 7205 Ohms Lane, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55439-2195, (800) 23105165.

A4.1.3. Other sources as approved by HQ USAF/SG mental health consultants.

Attachment 5

PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION (PEP) TRAINING

That upon which you are about to embark . . . is going to be a challenge to your coping skills. Specific approaches to enhance effectively dealing with challenging experiences, also referred to as critical incidents, have been developed. The approaches include pre-exposure preparation training, defusings immediately after a critical incident and critical incident stress debriefings within 24 to 72 hours after a critical incident.

Why Pre-exposure preparation training?

Why so many efforts and new activities concerning dealing with stress? Aren't we in the Air Force already trained to function in stressful situations? Is it really necessary to make a fuss about pre-exposure preparation?

The clear answer to the last question is: YES! This does not mean that we in the Air Force are weak and vulnerable. It means all of us can be challenged to the maximum of our coping skills by anticipated and unanticipated events.

REASONS FOR PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION TRAINING

Experiences from:

- wars
- civil disasters
- daily life events

Have lead to extended understanding of:

- stress and stress reactions
- the risk of long term after-effects (e.g., post traumatic stress disorders)
- principles and methods in coping with stress

Experience from many wars tells about the importance of paying attention to combat stress. The occurrence of combat stress casualties is a well known phenomenon (with many labels throughout the years: shell shock, war neuroses, battle shock, and battle fatigue). In intensive combat situations, the level of combat stress casualties can equal the number of wounded in action casualties.

Civilian experiences with disasters, natural and manmade, have shown us that individuals directly and indirectly involved with an incident can experience significant disruption in their ability to maintain normal daily activities.

Daily life events such as violent crimes, sudden death of loved ones, serious illnesses, and fatal vehicle collisions among others have major effects in challenging individuals' skills to cope.

From all of these sources of experience, our knowledge about stress, crisis reactions, and possible consequences has increased considerably. Substantial evidence has been collected about the long term after effects - post traumatic stress disorder - not only in Vietnam era veterans but in conflicts prior to Vietnam and since Vietnam. Post traumatic stress disorder affects individuals experiencing distress and traumatic daily events as well as individuals experiencing combat.

The subjects of stress and coping with stress are now incorporated in the training of many occupational groups including law enforcement personnel, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians and other health care professionals.

Military organizations have acknowledged to a greater extent than previously the importance of stress factors for both military effectiveness and the well-being of personnel. Many new initiatives in the military taken in the area of stress management are results of this development.

STRESS AND STRESS REACTIONS

DEFINITION OF STRESS

Stress is the physical and psychological process within the individual that results from perceiving an event as a threat and perceiving limited choices in dealing with the threat.

FACTS ABOUT STRESS

- stress is inherent to survival
- stress is necessary for human development and growth
- stress is initially positive in generating action, but too much is unhealthy
- stress can affect physical health
- stress is additive--a combination of stressful experiences can have as much effect as one very traumatic event
- stress is manageable

When we face a situation we perceive as a threat to our physical or emotional well being, we react to the threat. The reaction includes our mind and our body. It is important to understand that reacting is normal.

KEYS TO REMEMBER IN DEALING WITH STRESS

- everyone has stress reactions
- the reactions are NORMAL reactions to abnormal situations
- reactions must be dealt with to avoid performance disruption and the development of physical and psychological illnesses
- if you don't deal with stress; it will deal with you
- in many cases, there are effective, simple means for dealing with stress

AIMS OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

- to enhance performance in difficult circumstances
- to avoid reduction of performance
- to return from temporarily reduced performance
- to prevent unnecessary (short and long-term) after-effects on performance

PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION (PEP) TRAINING

For each of us, our primary preparation for any coping with the stress associated with any future event is our previous experience. Some will have more previous experience from which to draw than others.

Some will have had experiences dealing with situations that others may not have ever even imagined. A goal of all training endeavors and exercises should be to build upon your experience base so that it can be harvested at necessary times and places.

Due to our inability to anticipate every event that may occur and the extent that even the most experienced person can experience something new, each of us will have times where our resources for coping with stress are challenged to their fullest. PEP Training is associated with knowing what to do in these times to maximize potential performance, minimize performance reduction, restore from performance reductions, and prevent long term performance reductions.

What you have read so far about stress is a basic component for coping with challenges to your experience base for dealing with stress. What you have read so far should help you understand that stress is normal and that you are normal for experiencing stress.

Understanding stress is normal and that you are normal for experiencing stress can be an initial step in dealing with stress. Denial of stress puts dealing with stress on hold, but denial does not put the build up of stress on hold. Instead denial of stress leaves you more vulnerable for experiencing the physical and emotional consequences of stress. Trying to tough it out alone can set you up for either physical or emotional consequences interfering with your ability to perform.

PEP Step One:

**Let yourself know you are feeling stress
and let others know you are feeling stress.**

Talking about your feelings of stress can accomplish two things:

- 1) it helps you recognize that you are experiencing stress
- 2) it gives others an opportunity to acknowledge their own feelings of stress

Immediately such communication can have the effect of mutual feelings of support. Each can acknowledge the other's normalcy of feelings as you are dealing with the current abnormal situation.

Too often, expressing difficulty with feelings gets confused with being weak. There is an old story from WW I that goes something like this: Two soldiers at the front are undergoing an extended period of shelling while hunkered down in a fox hole. One in tone of bravado attempting to express his courage says to the other, "Hey, I bet you're really scared." The other one says, "Yeah, I really am scared and if you were as scared as I am, you wouldn't still be here." So who is courageous? The one denying feelings of fear or the one who will acknowledge the feelings of fear, experience the discomfort associated with the feelings, but continue on to do his duty? You decide, but the point here is that stress acknowledged can be stress disarmed. **Stress repressed becomes stress expressed** -- but not the way you probably wanted it expressed -- but in a physical or emotional way that interferes with being able to perform.

PEP Step Two:

Know And Practice Positive Stress Behaviors

- Know and stay in touch with your purpose
- Be a team player - think we instead of me
- Develop a sense of confidence about your group's ability to accomplish your mission
- Practice your spiritual beliefs and utilize them as source of support

- Have a buddy
- Accurately identify what you can and cannot control

Change, if necessary, the things you can change: what you think, do, and feel

Accept, not necessarily like, the things you cannot change: what other's think, do, and feel and anything that has already happened

PEP Step Three:

Avoid Sources Of Ineffective Coping

- Insufficient sleep
- Insufficient nourishment
- Insufficient fluid intakeAlcohol and other drug abuse
- Breakdown of respect for those in the chain of command
- Breakdown of respect for lawful orders and directives
- Breakdown of communication within the chain of command

If at all possible, don't let yourself get too thirsty, tired, or hungry.

A final thought about dealing with stress

You, alone, can do it;

but, you can't do it alone

It is ultimately your responsibility to deal with your feelings of stress by knowing and using the methods most effective for you, but your ability to effectively deal with stress will be greatly enhanced by letting others be a part of your efforts.

Attachment 6

COMMANDERS' AND SUPERVISORS' GUIDE TO PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION (PEP) TRAINING

That upon which you are about to embark . . . is going to be a challenge to your coping skills. Specific approaches to enhance effectively dealing with challenging experiences, also referred to as critical incidents, have been developed. The approaches include pre-exposure preparation training, defusings immediately after a critical incident and critical incident stress debriefings within 24 to 72 hours after a critical incident.

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REASONS FOR PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION TRAINING

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- civil disasters
- daily life events

have lead to extended understanding of:

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Experience from many wars tells about the importance of paying attention to combat stress. The occurrence of combat stress casualties is a well known phenomenon (with many labels throughout the years: shell shock, war neuroses, battle shock, and battle fatigue). In intensive combat situations, the level of combat stress casualties can equal the number of wounded in action casualties.

Civilian experiences with disasters, natural and manmade, have shown us that individuals directly and indirectly involved with an incident can experience significant disruption in their ability to maintain normal daily activities.

Daily life events such as violent crimes, sudden death of loved ones, serious illnesses, and fatal vehicle collisions among others have major effects in challenging individuals' skills to cope.

From all of these sources of experience, our knowledge about stress, crisis reactions, and possible consequences has increased considerably. Substantial evidence has been collected about the long term after effects-- post traumatic stress disorder - not only in Vietnam era veterans but in conflicts prior to Vietnam and since Vietnam. Post traumatic stress disorder affects individuals experiencing distress and traumatic daily events as well as individuals experiencing combat.

Knowledge has been gathered about ways to counteract the potential effects from traumatic events. Methods to deal with the stress resulting from events have been developed. Principles for managing and coping with stressful situations have been identified.

Methods incorporating the gathered knowledge and the identified principles are now used by civilian organizations in planning and preparing for large scale events and daily life traumatic events. The subjects of stress and coping with stress are now incorporated in the training of many occupational groups including law enforcement personnel, fire fighters, emergency medical technicians and other health care professionals.

Military organizations have acknowledged to a greater extent than previously the importance of stress factors for both military effectiveness and the well-being of personnel. Many new initiatives in the military taken in the area of stress management are results of this development.

STRESS AND STRESS REACTIONS

DEFINITION OF STRESS

Stress is the physical and psychological process within the individual that results from perceiving an event as a threat and perceiving limited choices in dealing with the threat.

When we face a situation we perceive as a threat to our physical or emotional well being, we react to the threat. The reaction includes our mind and our body. It is important to understand that reacting is normal.

FACTS ABOUT STRESS

- stress is inherent to survival
- stress is necessary for human development and growth
- stress is initially positive in generating action, but too much is unhealthy
- stress can affect physical health
- stress is additive -- a combination of stressful experiences can have as much effect as one traumatic stressful event
- stress is manageable

KEYS TO REMEMBER IN DEALING WITH STRESS

- everyone has stress reactions
- the reactions are NORMAL reactions to abnormal situations
- reactions must be dealt with to avoid disruption of the ability to perform
- and the development of physical and psychological illnesses
- if you don't deal with stress; it will deal with you
- in many cases, there are effective, simple means for dealing with stress

AIMS OF STRESS MANAGEMENT

- to enhance performance in difficult circumstances
- to avoid reduction of performance

- to return from temporarily reduced performance
- to prevent unnecessary (short and long-term)
- after-effects on performance

COMMANDERS' AND SUPERVISORS' ROLES IN PROMOTING POSITIVE OUTCOMES FROM STRESS REACTIONS

Commanders' and supervisors' roles in promoting positive outcomes during times in stress consistently come down to one primary factor -- LEADERSHIP.

Components of Leadership For Reducing Stress

- be a leader in words and actions
- provide timely and accurate communication of information
- promote attention to taking care of basic needs
- make time for knowing those being lead
- and those being lead knowing you

The absence of these elements of leadership can often inhibit the effectiveness of all other stress management efforts.

Critical Contributions in Protecting Against Negative Outcomes From Stress Reactions

- High unit cohesion
- Tough, realistic training
- Trained unit leaders, medical personnel, and chaplains
- Periodic respite from the "front"
- Leaders demonstrate competence, courage, candor, and commitment
- Leader's keep troops informed
- Leaders support attendance at defusings and debriefings

PEP TRAINING STEPS

For each of us, our primary preparation for any coping with the stress associated with any future event is our previous experience. Some will have more previous experience from which to draw than others. Some will have had experiences dealing with situations that others may not have ever even imagined. A goal of all training endeavors and exercises should be to build upon your experience base so that it can be harvested at necessary times and places.

Due to our inability to anticipate every event that may occur and the extent that even the most experienced person can experience something new, each of us will have times where our resources for coping with stress are challenged to their fullest extent. PEP Training is associated with knowing what to do in these times to maximize potential performance, minimize performance reduction, restore from performance reductions, and prevent long term performance reductions.

What you have read so far about stress is a basic component for coping with challenges to your experience base for dealing with stress. What you have read so far should help you understand that stress is normal and that you are normal for experiencing stress.

Understanding stress is normal and that you are normal for experiencing stress can be an initial step in dealing with stress. Denial of stress puts dealing with stress on hold, but denial does not put the build up of stress on hold. Instead denial of stress leaves you more vulnerable for experiencing the physical and emotional consequences of stress. Trying to tough it out alone can set you up for either physical or emotional consequences interfering with your ability to perform.

PEP Step One:

Let yourself know you are feeling stress and let others know you are feeling stress.

Talking about your feelings of stress can accomplish two things:

- 1) it helps you recognize that you are experiencing stress
- 2) it gives others an opportunity to acknowledge their own feelings of stress

Immediately such communication can have the effect of mutual feelings of support. Each can acknowledge the other's normalcy of feelings as you are dealing with the current abnormal situation.

Too often, expressing difficulty with feelings gets confused with being weak. There is an old story from WW I that goes something like this: Two soldiers at the front are undergoing an extended period of shelling while hunkered down in a fox hole. One in tone of bravado attempting to express his courage says to the other, "Hey, I bet you're really scared." The other one says, "Yeah, I really am scared and if you were as scared as I am, you wouldn't still be here." So who is courageous? The one denying feelings of fear or the one who will acknowledge the feelings of fear, experience the discomfort associated with the feelings, but continue on to do his duty? You decide, but the point here is that stress

acknowledged can be stress disarmed. Stress repressed becomes stress expressed -- but not the way you probably wanted it expressed -- but in a physical or emotional way that interferes with being able to perform.

PEP Step Two:

Know And Practice Positive Stress Behaviors

- Know and stay in touch with your purpose
- Be a team player - think we instead of me
- Develop a sense of confidence about your group's ability to accomplish your mission
- Practice your spiritual beliefs and utilize them as a source of support
- Have a buddy
- Accurately identify what you can and cannot control

Change, if necessary, the things you can change: what you think, do, and feel

Accept, not necessarily like, the things you cannot change: what other's think, do, and feel and anything that has already happened

PEP Step Three:
Avoid Sources of Ineffective Coping

- Insufficient sleep
- Insufficient nourishment
- Insufficient fluid intake
- Alcohol and other drug abuse
- Breakdown of respect for those in the chain of command
- Breakdown of respect for lawful orders and directives
- Breakdown of communication within the chain of command

If at all possible, don't let yourself get too thirsty, tired, or hungry.

A final thought about dealing with stress

You, alone, can do it;
but, you can't do it alone

It is ultimately your responsibility to deal with your feelings of stress by knowing and using the methods most effective for you, but your ability to effectively deal with stress will be greatly enhanced by letting others be a part of your efforts.

Attachment 7

CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS TEAM (CIST) GUIDE FOR CONDUCTING PRE-EXPOSURE PREPARATION (PEP) TRAINING

Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP) Training functions as a primary preventive function of the CIST. Accomplishing PEP training can be a major challenge to the CIST. Like many other preventive efforts, the need for the preventive intervention may not be perceived by those in a position to organize it being accomplished. In addition, the potential value of the preventive intervention may not be perceived by those for whom the Pre-Exposure Preparation is designed to assist.

Overcoming the hurdles associated with “why are we doing this” are primarily a function of presenting to commanders and supervisors an understanding that Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a preventive service that includes three components -- pre-exposure preparation training, defusings, and critical incident stress debriefings. Education regarding the functions of the CIST should be accomplished on a regular basis through briefings and articles in base publications. Education regarding the functions of the CIST should not wait until a potentially traumatic incident is anticipated or has occurred.

Pre-exposure training should be provided to all individuals for whom exposure to a potentially traumatic event is anticipated. It is critical for support of the training experience that commanders and supervisors attend the training.

If there are other predeployment briefings being provided, the pre-exposure preparation training should be included as one of the briefings. If a formal briefing agenda for those who will be exposed to the potentially traumatic event has not been developed, the CIST liaison officer should take the initiative with the wing commander for the pre-exposure prevention training to be accomplished. The responsiveness of the wing commander will be a function of the level of familiarity with CISM that the CIST has assisted the wing commander in developing.

Pre-exposure preparation training is primarily accomplished through a combination of verbal briefings and providing reference material to each participant. All command and supervisory personnel should receive a copy of “Commanders’ and Supervisors’ Guide to Pre-Exposure Preparation Training.” All other personnel should be provided a copy of the “Pre-Exposure Preparation Training” brochure.

The purpose of the verbal briefing is to emphasize the BASICS associated with understanding and effectively coping with stress.

Awareness Goals From Conducting PEP Training

1. Stress is a normal reaction to abnormal conditions
2. We each from our past experiences have our own ways for dealing with stress but all are vulnerable for our coping skills being challenged to their fullest extent
3. Ineffectively dealing with stress can affect current performance and cause long term problems.
4. Knowing how to deal with stress can enhance current performance and minimize the potential for long term problems.
5. Repressing and denying feelings, although temporarily effective, can negatively affect performance and are high risk approaches for long term problems.

6. Following the three steps of pre-exposure prevention training provides a means for enhancing current performance and minimizing long term problems.
7. Following Step One by acknowledging to self AND to others feelings of stress provides the initial step for dealing with the stress and provides an immediate means for support and acceptance.
8. Following Step Two provides a means to minimize the development of stress.
9. Following Step Three provides a means for physical capacity and organizational structure to more effectively deal with presented stressful challenges.

Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP) training is not designed to be a seminar on stress management. It is designed to provide basic information of a potentially preventive nature that can be easily grasped and applied by individuals who are facing a challenging situation. In this sense it is a PEP talk which provides guidance for maintaining the ability to accomplish the mission and minimizing potential long term effects.

Pre-Exposure Preparation is also designed as a lead in to the processes of defusings and critical incident stress debriefings (CISDs). Through PEP Training the “stage” will have been set for personnel to understand the central concept in Defusings and CISDs of sharing personal experiences and feelings with others to enhance coping with stress. PEP training provides a focal point for communicating to personnel the value of participating in Defusings and CISDs.

Commander and supervisor Pre-Exposure Preparation Training is not a separate training process from the Pre-Exposure Preparation Training provided to all personnel prior to exposure to a potentially traumatic event. Command and supervisory personnel should receive PEP Training with the remaining personnel to avoid any appearance that only certain groups can have problems with stress.

Commanders and supervisors are provided the Commander’s and Supervisor’s Guide to Pre-Exposure Prevention Training. Encourage commanders and supervisors to refer to the “Components of Leadership for Reducing Stress” and the “Critical Contributions in Protecting Against Negative Outcomes From Stress Reactions” sections as additional guidance regarding roles they play as commanders and supervisors in personnel dealing with situations that challenge coping skills to the maximum.

Conducting Pre-Exposure Preparation (PEP) Briefings

Getting Started

Introduce who you are. Introduce other CIST members if present. Emphasize that Pre-Exposure Preparation is designed to enhance ability to perform the mission - enhancing “can do” through knowing “how to.”

Be sensitive to how your briefing can be perceived negatively:

1. “You’re saying we can’t handle a tough situation”
2. “You’re saying the situation is going to be a lot worse than we think it is going to be.”
3. “You’re saying I’m not prepared -- I’m not adequately trained”

Recognize that any of these perceptions can lead to personnel choosing to either tune out the information or experience increased feelings of stress that interfere with being able to process the information. Recognize that depending on the personnel’s awareness of the potentially traumatic event associated with the

pre-exposure preparation training, that each individual will be experiencing stress to some degree associated with his or her current thoughts and beliefs about what may happen and how he or she will deal with what happens.

The pre-exposure preparation briefing requires the briefer to maintain a delicate balance between: 1) dealing with stress can be difficult (otherwise, why even do the briefings) and 2) you can do it (maintain organizational confidence and *esprit de corps*). Due to the nature of this delicate balance it is strongly recommended that CIST members practice doing Pre-Exposure Preparation Training briefings with one another. The listening CIST members should provide challenges to the briefer regarding the purpose and value of Pre-Exposure Preparation Training. Conducting these practice briefings should enhance the ability of CIST members in being able to effectively maintain the delicate balance between “it can be tough” and “you can do it” while conducting the training.

Emphasize the importance of Pre-Exposure Preparation Training by accenting we have learned too much about the potentially long term damaging effects of stress associated trauma not to provide preparation if there is an opportunity for

presenting the information. Use the Pre-Exposure Preparation Training brochure as a reference for communicating the basic concepts.

Using the “Pre-Exposure Preparation Training” Brochure

Having distributed the Pre-Exposure Training brochure to participants, refer to it’s content as you conduct the training.

Reasons for Pre-Exposure Training

Points to Emphasize:

- Discuss the three sources of experiences that have helped us learn the value of pre-exposure preparation training: wars, civil disasters, and daily life events
- Discuss our awareness that there can be short and LONG TERM negative effects from experiencing events that challenge our coping skills to their maximum.
- What we have learned from wars, civil disasters, and daily life events about the potential effects of trauma has lead to training for dealing with stress being widely practiced.
- Pre-exposure prevention training may be new to the trainees, but it is not new in terms of what we have learned is important to do.

Definition of Stress

Points to Emphasize:

- All of us don’t respond to all things the same way.
- What we tell ourselves about what we are experiencing AND what we believe about our ability to deal with what we are experiencing are the factors defining our experienced level of stress.

Facts About Stress

Points to Emphasize:

- The “Facts About Stress” list includes positive and negative functions of stress

Key to Remember in Dealing With Stress

Points to Emphasize:

- The normalcy of experiencing stress.
- Experiencing stress is not an indicator of “strong vs. weak.”
- The risks associated with denial of feelings of stress
- The potential for repressed feelings to be expressed in less desired physical, emotional, or behavioral ways.

Aims of Stress Management List

Points to Emphasize:

- Knowing how to deal with stress can:
 - (1) enhance the ability to perform
 - (2) avoid reduction in performance
 - (3) restore from temporarily reduced performance
 - (4) prevent unnecessary short and long-term effects on performance
- The wide range of benefits directly associated with performance derived from stress management

Pre-Exposure Preparation Training

Points to Emphasize:

- Frame Pre-Exposure Preparation Training as BUILDING ON individuals already present coping skills.
- PEP Training is not “I cannot cope” to “I can cope” training.
- PEP Training is “I can cope” to “I can cope better” training.
- Presenting the training in the context of “you are healthy and capable individuals and this training can help you with your efforts to stay that way.”
- PEP training is knowing what to do in those times when our coping skills are challenged to their maximum.

PEP Step One

Points to Emphasize:

- In Step One’s simplicity -- simply saying aloud to self and others I’m feeling stressed -- there is the potential for positive effects on our own feelings and especially on our relationships with others.
- Practicing Step One opens a chance for a “me, too” or “you, too” response
- Practicing Step One also opens the door to a “we can do” rather than “I have to do it” approach to accomplishing the mission.

Ask for examples from attendees when in the past saying out loud to others how he or she was feeling had a major positive effect on being able to deal with the feeling and finding support and acceptance for the feeling. Be prepared to share a personal example to help attendees identify examples. The use of examples

at this point in the training can be one of the most important elements for attendees to practice Step One in actual situations.

Reference the “WW I” story to address old concepts of “courage under fire” and point out that while acknowledging the feeling, the scared individual made the choice to perform the mission. Emphasize that stressful feelings are not signs of weakness. Consider asking attendees who was courageous. Process responses in terms that both were courageous, but in different ways. Communicate the concept that feelings don’t define courage, actions will define courage.

PEP Step Two

Points to Emphasize:

- Briefly address each item on the list.
- Each of the items on the list when put into practice serves to minimize the stress we create for ourselves in situations that can be stressful.
- These approaches to stress don’t keep us from feeling stress; they serve to avoid increasing our stress level in potentially stressful situations.

PEP Step Three

Points to Emphasize:

- Briefly address each on the list.
- Each of the items are associated with maintaining either sufficient physical or organizational well being in order to apply efforts in coping with stress.
- Absence of any of the items in Step Three can restrict effectiveness in coping with stress.

Closing

Use the “you, alone, can do it, but you can’t do it alone” phrase to once again express the Pre-Exposure Preparation - PEP - Training component of you can do it - the ability to cope with stress is within you - but using your abilities is greatly enhanced by including others in your coping with stress.